

COX NEWS SERVICE

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'AMBER' ALERT FOR PRESIDENTIAL VISIT
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LONDON - WHENEVER PRESIDENT REAGAN GOES ABROAD, A SPECIAL SECURITY TASK FORCE DRAWN FROM THE SECRET SERVICE AND THE CIA DETERMINES THE 'THREAT LEVEL' OF THE TRIP.

THESE SECURITY ASSESSMENTS RANGE FROM ROUTINE TO A HIGH RISK OF AN ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT. IN RISING ORDER OF THREAT, THEY ARE CODE NAMED: BLACK, GREEN, AMBER AND RED.

WHEN REAGAN ARRIVES HERE MONDAY TO BEGIN A WEEK-LONG STAY, SECURITY WILL BE SET AT 'CONDITION AMBER.' WITH THE EXCEPTION OF A BRIEF TOUR ALONG THE NORTH KOREAN BORDER ON THE DMZ, WHICH HE MADE LAST FALL, THIS IS THE FIRST TIME REAGAN FACES A 'CONDITION AMBER' IN HIS FOREIGN TRAVELS, OFFICIALS FAMILIAR WITH SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS DISCLOSED SUNDAY.

THE 'CONDITION AMBER' SCENARIO, THE OFFICIALS SAID, DOES NOT FOCUS ON BRITAIN ITSELF. BY AND LARGE, THIS IS A LAW ABIDING LAND WHERE EVEN THE POLICE NORMALLY DO NOT CARRY WEAPONS.

INSTEAD, THE HIGH THREAT LEVEL ARISES BECAUSE WOULD-BE TERRORISTS CAN EASILY PENETRATE BRITISH BORDERS. THREE GROUPS IN PARTICULAR ARE BEING CLOSELY MONITORED, OFFICIALS SAID:

- FOLLOWERS OF ABU NIDAL, THE SYRIAN-BASED TERRORIST LEADER. IN 1982, NIDAL ORDERED THE ASSASSINATION OF THE ISRAELI AMBASSADOR IN LONDON, SHLOMO ARGOV. HE HAS VOWED TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST BRITAIN UNTIL HIS MEN, WHO WERE CAUGHT, ARE FREED.

- POTENTIAL LIBYAN 'HIT SQUADS.' IN THE WAKE OF THE APRIL 17 KILLING OF A BRITISH POLICEMAN OUTSIDE THE LIBYAN EMBASSY, THE LIBYANS HAVE THREATENED TO EXACT REVENGE AGAINST THE BRITISH FOR HAVING EXPELLED THEIR DIPLOMATS AND FOR ARRESTING LIBYAN STUDENTS ON TERRORISM CHARGES.

- THE RADICAL FACTION OF THE IRISH REPUBLICAN ARMY. IN RECENT YEARS, A SERIES OF BOMBS HAVE BEEN PLANTED IN CENTRAL LONDON TO PRESSURE PARLIAMENT TO END BRITAIN'S CENTURIES-OLD RULE OVER NORTHERN IRELAND.

WHILE REAGAN IS NOT DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN ANY OF THESE SITUATIONS, THE PRESIDENT MAY PRESENT A TEMPTING TARGET TO THOSE WHO SEEK TO EMBARRASS THE BRITISH WHILE HE IS ON BRITISH SOIL, OFFICIALS SAID.

THESE POTENTIAL THREATS HAVE LED TO UNUSUALLY INTENSE CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN AMERICAN AND BRITISH SECURITY TEAMS IN ADVANCE OF REAGAN'S ARRIVAL.

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SCOTLAND YARD HAS A STRICT POLICY AGAINST ALLOWING FOREIGN SECURITY FORCES FROM CARRYING WEAPONS. THIS POLICY HAS CAUSED SOME FRICTION SINCE THE SECRET SERVICE USUALLY CARRIES AN ARRAY OF WEAPONS TO PROTECT THE PRESIDENT. THEY INCLUDE ISRAELI-MADE UZI SUBMACHINE GUNS AND SAWED-OFF PUMP-ACTION SHOTGUNS.

A COMPROMISE HAS BEEN STRUCK UNDER WHICH REAGAN'S "CLOSE PERSONAL ESCORT" WILL BE PERMITTED TO CARRY WALTHER PPK GUNS UNDER SUITS OR MODEL 10 SMITH AND WESSON REVOLVERS UNDER CASUAL CLOTHES WHEN ON DUTY ON THE GROUNDS OF ROYAL WINDSOR CASTLE. BUT THE HEAVY ARTILLERY WILL STAY IN THE BAGGAGE HOLD.

THE "CLOSE PERSONAL ESCORT" IS DRAWN FROM A FORCE OF 20 SECRET SERVICE MEN WHO ARE ACCUSTOMED TO WORKING AS A TEAM. SIX OF THEM ARE ON DUTY AT ANY ONE TIME. EACH OF THEM IS AT LEAST 6 FEET, 2 INCHES TALL.

ABOUT 300 ADDITIONAL U.S. SECURITY AGENTS ARE INVOLVED IN THE 10-DAY PRESIDENTIAL TRIP, WHICH BEGAN IN IRELAND AND WHICH INCLUDES A SIX-HOUR HOP TO NORMANDY ON WEDNESDAY TO MARK THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF D-DAY.

THEY WILL BE SUPPLEMENTED BY SEVERAL HUNDRED AGENTS OF THE BRITISH SPECIAL BRANCH, WHICH NORMALLY PROTECTS QUEEN ELIZABETH II AND LEADING BRITISH POLITICIANS.

SECURITY PRECAUTIONS ARE SO TIGHT IN ADVANCE OF THE PRESIDENT'S ARRIVAL THAT OFFICIALS HAVE REFUSED TO DISCLOSE WHERE THE 300-MEMBER U.S. DELEGATION TO THE ECONOMIC SUMMIT WILL BE HOUSED.

WHITE HOUSE SOURCES REVEALED, HOWEVER, THAT REAGAN WILL STAY AT WINFIELD HOUSE, WHICH FACES A PARK NEAR THE LONDON ZOO AND WHICH NORMALLY SERVES AS THE RESIDENCE OF THE U.S. AMBASSADOR.

THE REST OF THE AMERICAN DELEGATION WILL BE DIVIDED BETWEEN GROSVENOR HOUSE AND THE BRITANNIA. BOTH HOTELS ARE LOCATED NEAR THE U.S. EMBASSY ON GROSVENOR SQUARE IN THE EXCLUSIVE MAYFAIR DISTRICT OF LONDON.